

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

THIRTEENTH SESSION

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CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Agenda item 29:	
Programmes of technical assistance (<i>continued</i>):	
(c) Establishment of an international administrative service	
Examination of the draft resolution concerning United Nations technical assistance in public administration (<i>concluded</i>)	157
Agenda item 12:	
Report of the Economic and Social Council (chapter I, section VI, chapters II, III, IV and V)	
Question of increasing the membership of the Economic and Social Council	157

Chairman: Mr. Toru HAGIWARA (Japan).

AGENDA ITEM 29

Programmes of technical assistance (*continued*):
(c) Establishment of an international administrative service (A/3848, chap. III, section VI, A/C.2/200, A/C.2/L.379/Rev.2)

EXAMINATION OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION CONCERNING UNITED NATIONS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (A/C.2/L.379/REV.2) (*concluded*)

1. Mr. URQUIDI (Mexico) said that he had abstained from voting on the ten-Power draft resolution (A/C.2/L.379/Rev.2), because, in his Government's view, administrative posts, both executive and operational, should not be filled by foreign officials and because the public administration of the under-developed countries could be improved with the aid of the existing United Nations technical assistance programmes and the specialized agencies without establishing an international administrative service either now or in the future—even on a trial basis.

2. Mr. WOULBROUN (Belgium) expressed his regret that the French amendment (A/C.2/L.381) had not been adopted. The Belgian delegation had not wished to place any obstacle in the way of an experiment which might benefit some under-developed countries, but it reserved its position with regard to the financial implications of the scheme.

3. Mr. DIPP GOMEZ (Dominican Republic) again expressed his delegation's appreciation of the technical assistance services. He had voted in favour of the amendments submitted by Ceylon and the Federation of Malaya, and of that submitted by France (A/C.2/L.381), because they clarified points of substance and form. He had also voted for the Argentine amendments (A/C.2/L.382), because he considered that executive and operational functions were the privileges and responsibility of the nationals of the various countries. In view of the rejection of the

two latter amendments and of the uncertainty created by the discrepancy between the title of the draft resolution and that of the agenda item, he had been obliged to abstain in the vote on the draft resolution as a whole.

4. Mr. ENNAJI (Tunisia) thanked the sponsors of the draft resolution for having taken into account his suggestions regarding the language of operative paragraph 2 (a). On the other hand, he regretted the rejection of the Brazilian amendment to delete the word "normally" in the same paragraph. He had voted for the draft resolution in the hope that the Technical Assistance Administration would take into consideration requests for assistance in public administration from independent countries—such as Guinea—which were not yet Members of the United Nations.

5. Mr. CARRILLO (El Salvador) said that, if the amendments proposed by France and Argentina had been incorporated in the draft resolution, his delegation would not have been obliged to abstain. The text which had been adopted was less satisfactory than the language proposed by Argentina, which was wider in scope and showed more deference to the sovereign States which needed the type of assistance in question.

6. Mr. MORALES (Argentina) reaffirmed that his delegation wished success to the aspirations of the developing countries, more particularly those which had recently attained independence. There was no doubt that the present structure of the technical assistance programmes enabled all the needs of those countries to be met. What was needed was not to set up new institutions, but to increase the available resources. International efforts should be concentrated on helping all countries to govern themselves, and not wasted on measures such as the establishment of a permanent international administrative service. The purpose of the French and Argentine amendments had been to ensure the application of those principles. Those amendments having been rejected, the Argentine delegation had been obliged to abstain.

AGENDA ITEM 12

Report of the Economic and Social Council (chapter I, section VI, chapters II, III, IV and V) (A/3848)

QUESTION OF INCREASING THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (A/3848, CHAP. I, SECTION VI)

7. Mr. SCHURMANN (Netherlands) said that, at the eleventh session of the General Assembly, a number of Latin American delegations had made proposals for an increase in the membership of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council and in the number of judges of the International Court of Justice. The proposal relating to the membership of

the Security Council had been debated, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics had opposed any alteration of the Charter of the United Nations unless China's seat in the United Nations was occupied by a representative of the People's Republic of China (621st plenary meeting). The General Assembly had thereupon postponed the whole question to the twelfth session, and, at that session, had again postponed it to the thirteenth session. Meanwhile, the Economic and Social Council, on the proposal of Brazil, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States, had adopted resolution 690 B (XXVI), inviting the General Assembly to give favourable consideration to an increase in the membership of the Council. He wished to explain why sixteen delegations, including the Netherlands delegation, had voted in favour of that resolution in the Council.

8. Under Chapters IX and X of the Charter, the Economic and Social Council had very important responsibilities covering an impressively broad field; and if the Council's work was to be successful, it was essential that it should enjoy the full confidence of all the parties to whom its recommendations were directed. Those parties should feel that the Council was in a position to work efficiently and to make decisions which adequately reflected the majority of the various trends of economic and social thought. When the United Nations had had only fifty-one Members, it could be felt that a Council of eighteen could give due weight to the various trends of opinion. Now that there were eighty-one Members in the United Nations, that was no longer the case: the different groups no longer occupied a number of seats in the Council commensurate with their importance, with the result that confidence in the Council's decisions had been shaken. His delegation did not wish to enter into the question whether that scepticism was justified. His personal experience had been that all questions coming before the Council were given serious consideration; but it had to be recognized that, especially among some of the countries of Africa and Asia, the Council's recommendations were no longer accorded the high esteem which should attach to so important a body. The lack of confidence and doubts he had referred to had been particularly apparent during the debate in the Committee on the draft resolutions concerning the Special Fund (513th-528th meetings). Some representatives had objected to the Governing Council of the Special Fund being elected by the Economic and Social Council on the ground that the Council did not represent all sectors of world opinion.

9. Such a state of affairs could be remedied only by increasing the membership of the Council. That necessity had become evident to the Council itself, which had felt unable to discuss in all its variety the world economic situation, a subject of great importance to the under-developed countries, because its membership included only two representatives from Asia and one from Africa. Accordingly, the Council had felt it necessary to include in its resolution 690 (XXVI) on the world economic situation, a recommendation relating to an increase in the membership of the Council. It had explained that that increase would provide a more effective organ for carrying out the obligations placed upon the Council, and that it should be designed to preserve the expeditious conduct of the work of the Council.

10. As a technical organ, the Economic and Social Council could only recommend the aims to be pursued. The decision as to the number of members which would most suitably achieve the aims in view must be left to the General Assembly, and it was, therefore, for the Second Committee to make a recommendation on the subject. The Netherlands delegation did not consider that the membership of the Council should be increased by the same percentage as the increase in the membership of the United Nations since its inception: a Council of twenty-eight members would not be able to work expeditiously. Some delegations had proposed a membership of twenty-one, but that figure was not large enough to allow for equitable geographical distribution, and did not seem to justify the complicated procedure of amending the Charter. The Netherlands delegation favoured the figure of twenty-four, which would enable the Council to preserve the expeditious conduct of its work, while ensuring adequate geographical representation. The distribution of the seats was a predominantly political question, and he would, therefore, refrain from discussing it in the Second Committee.

11. Some representatives might question the advisability of considering a measure which, while justifiable on technical, economic, social and administrative grounds, might remain unattainable for political reasons. But the reasons for which the USSR opposed any increase in the membership of a political organ, such as the Security Council, should not necessarily cause it to oppose a measure relating to a technical organ, such as the Economic and Social Council, especially, since no one would infer from such an attitude that the USSR had changed its attitude on the question of the representation of China. Accordingly, he appealed to the Soviet delegation not to reject a measure which it would undoubtedly acknowledge to be in the best interests of the United Nations. If, however, the Soviet Union maintained its position, the Committee ought not to discontinue its efforts on that account. Article 108 of the Charter provided that amendments to the Charter must be adopted by a vote of two-thirds of the Members of the General Assembly and ratified by two-thirds of the Members of the United Nations, including all the permanent members of the Security Council. Thus, the veto power could only be used at the second stage of the procedure, and there was nothing to prevent the General Assembly from adopting a resolution to increase the membership of the Economic and Social Council, even if a permanent member of the Security Council voted against it. Since the Charter had not prescribed any time limit for ratification, it was conceivable that the USSR might, out of deference to the opinion of so many countries, subsequently ratify the decision taken, thus changing its attitude as others had recently done, for example, with respect to the Special Fund. But even if the USSR delayed its ratification, a resolution by the General Assembly expressing the opinion of two-thirds of the Members of the United Nations would be highly important, since it would clearly show why the Economic and Social Council was not functioning as well as it might.

12. His delegation had proposed to the General Committee that the Second Committee should consider the item before it was dealt with in the Special Political Committee, because it felt that the substantive arguments in favour of increasing the membership of the

Council would receive more attention in the Second Committee. Since it was the responsibility of the Special Political Committee to adopt the final recommendation, the Second Committee could limit itself to discussing the matter, and could then communicate the summary records of its meetings to the Special Political Committee with a report summarizing the main conclusions it had reached. That report might include a paragraph with the following wording:

"The Second Committee of the General Assembly is of the opinion that the effective functioning of the Economic and Social Council demands that its membership should be increased to twenty-four and recommends that the Charter of the United Nations be amended accordingly."

The report might also mention the result of the vote on that paragraph. A draft resolution taking into account the conclusions formulated could then be prepared and introduced in the Special Political Committee. He hoped that members of the Committee would have been convinced by his statement and would act accordingly.

13. Mr. SECADES (Cuba) said that the idea of increasing the membership of the Economic and Social Council, in order to enable that organ, and thus the United Nations as a whole, to work more efficiently—an idea which had been proposed by the Latin-American delegations—had not encountered any serious opposition and had been decisively approved by the Council itself in its resolution 690 B (XXVI). Since the Special Political Committee was to make a thorough study of the question, the Second Committee should not adopt a draft resolution on it, but should communicate the results of its deliberations to that Committee. For the reasons given by the representative of the Netherlands, his delegation was in favour of increasing the membership of the Council, but it reserved its position with respect to the actual figure.

14. Mr. ABDEL-GHANI (United Arab Republic) said that the Second Committee was not competent to express an opinion on the question of increasing the membership of the Council, a matter which involved amending one of the Articles of the Charter and which, consequently, was the responsibility of the Special Political Committee. In that connexion, he emphasized that it would be unwise to try to amend the Charter through pressure brought by debates, recommendations and resolutions. That would be a dangerous procedure which might, in more serious circumstances, recoil against the very delegations that were now advocating it. Moreover, neither the Second (Economic and Financial) Committee nor the Third (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) Committee was competent to state whether the Council's present composition did or did not enable it to carry out its tasks, which were numerous, in an effective manner. The question was too important to be settled by either of those Committees.

15. With respect to the substance of the problem, there seemed to be several reasons in favour of increasing the membership of the Council. Statistics had been prepared which showed that the Council was no longer representative of the United Nations as a whole. Among other things, it had been stated in writing that, if the permanent members of the Security Council continued to be members of the Economic and Social Council, none of the seventy-six other

Member States would be able to have a seat in it more than once every twenty-one years, assuming that none was elected for a longer term than three years. Other statistics showed that seats in the Council were not fairly distributed among the various parts of the world. In view of the ratio between the number of seats in the Council and the number of Member States in each region, the twenty-six European States and the twenty-two American States, which had eight and six seats respectively, ought actually to have only 5.2 and 4.9 seats; and the fifteen States in Asia and the Far East and the eighteen States in Africa and the Middle East ought to have 3.3 and 4 seats respectively, whereas the former had three seats and the latter had one. The disproportion was particularly striking with respect to the countries of Africa and the Middle East. The Asian States in particular were poorly represented in the Council, owing to the fact that the People's Republic of China, comprising one-fourth of the world's population, had no seat on it. His delegation considered that, if the membership of the Council was increased without first correcting that state of affairs, the situation would only be complicated still further.

16. Pending an agreement on the subject of increasing the membership of the Council, certain steps could be taken which would give a larger number of countries the immediate opportunity to take part in the Council's work. The Council had rarely exercised the right it enjoyed under Article 69 of the Charter, to invite any Member of the United Nations to participate, without vote, in its deliberations. The Council might appoint a standing committee to see that that Article of the Charter was carried out. Moreover, a larger number of Members would be able to participate in the Council's work through its functional commissions if, contrary to the present tendency, an effort was made to increase the number of those commissions, the number of their sessions and the number of their members.

17. Mr. ARNESEN (Norway) thought that the increase in the membership of the United Nations justified an increase in the membership of the Council. It was clear that some parts of the world, indeed those which might derive the greatest benefit from the Council's work, were inadequately represented. An addition to the number of countries interested in the Council's work and participating in it would be of the greatest help to that body in discharging its duties. Up to the present, thirty-seven Member States had never sat in the Economic and Social Council; in other words, in thirteen years, only little more than half the Member States had taken active part in the Council's work.

18. However, it would be preferable not to increase the membership of the Council beyond the minimum required to repair the injustices of the present distribution of seats, for, if there were too many members of the Council, they would not be able to work as expeditiously as in the past.

19. Mr. JANTUAH (Ghana) thought that the item now on the agenda was not a matter for the Second Committee, since it was essentially political. His delegation agreed with all the arguments which had been advanced in favour of increasing the membership of the Council, but it preferred the question to be dealt with in the Special Political Committee.

20. Mr. MORALES (Argentina) said he had nothing to add to the excellent statement made by the Netherlands representative, whose view he shared in all respects. He merely wished to join with him in asking the USSR delegation to consider the extreme importance of the question for the under-developed countries, especially those which had just attained their independence.

21. Mr. ARKADEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the USSR had never attempted to

thwart the aspirations and wishes of the under-developed countries and the new independent States. Its greatest desire was that the Economic and Social Council and all the organs of the United Nations should endeavour to satisfy the needs of the under-developed countries genuinely. The intentions of certain delegations, which posed as the appointed guardians of those countries, were much less definite.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.